Stepping On
Building confidence and reducing falls

Session Four

1. Today’s session introduction.
2. Exercise review and practice.
3. Review home fall hazards homework.

Break

5. Demonstration of hazardous and safe footwear.
6. Homework.

Falls are not inevitable and you can make a difference!
Moving About Safely

Outdoor Walking

BE ALERT TO HAZARDS

1. Cracks and uneven footpaths.
2. On the grass be aware of holes, dips and rocks.
3. Scan ahead as you walk.
4. Heel-and-toe as you walk.
5. Keep your head up, chin in and shoulders back. This helps you to look ahead and walk with confidence.

Safely getting about in the community

1. Wear sturdy shoes.
2. Use the handrails.
3. Crossing at the lights, remember the flashing ‘don’t walk’ sign means you can continue your crossing.
4. Make eye contact with the driver before you cross the road, even on a pedestrian crossing.
5. Cross the road with a group.
7. Wear light coloured clothing and carry a yellow or light coloured umbrella.
8. If you feel unsteady remember to ask for help — it’s a sign of strength, not weakness.
9. Plan ahead for outings so that you don’t have to rush.
Taking Care Against Bag Snatchers

- Carry your bag close to your side. Keeping your bag close to your body and your arm over it makes it a little harder for someone to grab the bag.
- Always keep the bag zipped up.
- Walk closer to the wall with bag towards the wall.
- Do not leave your bag unattended.
- Do not put wallet, bag or keys in your backpack.
- Do not carry lots of cash.
- What is in the bag? If it is important then photocopy it (as you would if going overseas).
- Have your keys ready before you get to the car or front door.
- Do not mark keys with your address.
- Tie your key on elastic and pin under your blouse or shirt so that it is easy to reach. Then if your bag is stolen you won’t lose your keys.
- Investigate local self-defence courses for older people.
What is a Safe, Comfortable Shoe?

A supportive shoe
- Firm arch support.
- Sole that is flexible under ball of foot and not too thick.
- Covers most of foot.
- A lightweight shoe.
- Roomy toe box for comfort.
- Lace or Velcro fastenings for stability.

A good fit
- At least a half inch between longest toe and inside of shoe.
- Holds foot well back into shoe.
- Snug, firm grip at heel counter.

A sole that grips
- Non-slip rubber sole.
- Textured for grip, with broken border.

A heel that is stable AND grips
- Non-slip and textured.
- Low heel (less than 1 to 2 inches).
- Bevelled heel.
- Broad heel (at least 2 inches) with rounded edge.
Safe Footwear

- Textured for grip
- Firm
- Low and stable
- Bevelled
- Thin and flexible
- Roomy for comfort
Keep doing your balance and strength exercises to keep safe outdoors

Remember

ON THE STAIRS OR CURB
1. Step up first with your stronger leg.
2. Step down first with your weaker leg.
3. Walk with your legs wider to make ramps and slopes easier.

WALKING STICK SAFETY
General principles for using a walking stick safely:
1. Walking stick height. Your walking stick should be adjusted for your height.
2. Use your walking stick in the opposite hand to your affected or weaker leg.
3. Renew the rubber stopper when it is worn.

Challenge your balance — it will improve. Keep doing it and you won’t lose it.